

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 TEL AV 02187 160934Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PA-02 SP-02 PM-05 NSC-05 SS-15 /050 W
-----038449 170102Z /23

R 151502Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1296
USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 2187

E. O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT IS
SUBJ: REACTION TO CONTROVERSIAL TV FILM "HIRBET HIZA" FEB 15,
1978

REF.: TEL AVIV 1837

1. ON FEB 13, MONDAY NIGHT, ISRAELI TV SHOWED THE FILM, HIRBET HIZA, A DRAMA DESCRIBING THE EVACUATION OF ARAB RESIDENTS FROM THEIR HOME VILLAGE BY ISRAELI SOLDIERS IN THE 1948 WAR. THE FILM HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR SCREENING ONE WEEK EARLIER. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING REQUEST BY SOME MEMBERS FROM THE ISRAEL BROADCASTING AUTHORITY, THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION DECIDED TO SUSPEND PROGRAM PENDING A HEARING BY KNESSET'S EDUCATION COMMITTEE. THE LATTER, IN TURN, DECIDED TO LEAVE FINAL SAY WITH BROADCASTING AUTHORITY. (SEE REFTEL FOR EARLIER MEDIA REACTION TO MINISTER'S DECISION NOT TO PERMIT SHOWING AS SCHEDULED.)

2. FEB 13 SHOWING ACTUALLY PLEASED NEITHER THOSE WHOSE OPPOSITION TO THE FILM'S SHOWING HAD LED TO ITS SUSPENSION, NOR THOSE WHOSE CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S INTERFERENCE WITH TV'S AUTONOMY AND WITH FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION WAS STILL QUITE ALIVE DESPITE THE SCREENING.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 TEL AV 02187 160934Z

3. OPINIONS REMAIN AS DIVIDED AFTER SCREENING AS THEY WERE BEFORE IT. THE CHARGES LEVELLED BY EACH GROUP AT THE OTHER HAVE ALSO NOT CHANGED. IT IS THE BASIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF ARTISTIC CREATIVITY VS DEFENDING NATIONAL MORALE AND ISRAEL'S IMAGE ABROAD PLUS TV'S ONE-SIDED EXPOSITION OF FACTS. (MEDIA FREQUENTLY MAKE THE ANALOGY TO US TV'S TREATMENT OF THE VIETNAM WAR.)

4. REFERENCE TO PRESENT-DAY POLITICS IS ALSO NOT LACKING. POST COMMENTS SNIDELY THAT "CERTAINLY THE FILM IS BAD PROPAGANDA FOR GOVERNMENT POLICY... AT A TIME WHEN WE ARE SLAPPING CARTER AND VANCE AND SADAT IN THE FACES WITH BULL-DOZERS....."

5. BLASTING THE S"SHAMEFUL" SCREENING, MAARIV NOTES CYNICALLY THAT "NOW EVERYBODY KNOWS THE 'TRUTH' ABOUT HOW ISRAEL REGAINED ITS INDEPENDENCE...." THE INFURIATED WRITER GOES AS FAR AS SAYING THAT "EVEN A PLO MASTER PROPAGANDIST COULD NOT HAVE DEVISED SUCH A SHOW... NOT EVEN GOEBBELS WOULD HAVE DONE BETTER... RENDERED A GREATER SERVICE TO THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL."

6. ONE FACT SEEMS UNCONTESTED: "INSTEAD OF THE FEW THOUSAND VIEWERS THE SHOW WOULD HAVE ATTRACTED HAD THE GOVERNMENT NOT TRIED TO CENSOR IT, IT HAS NOW BEEN AVIDLY WATCHED BY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS, WITH THE ENTIRE WORLD, NOT TO MENTION THE ARAB COUNTRIES, HAVING ITS EYES FOCUSED ON ISRAEL TV.... (TEDDY PREUSS IN DAVAR.)

7. BY AND LARGE, THOUGH, ALL STEAM SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN USED UP IN THE HEATED DEBATE PRECEDING THE SCREENING. THE PUBLIC AS WELL AS MEDIA SEEM NOW TO HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF THE WHOLE THING. THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY DID TABLE AN URGENT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 TEL AV 02187 160934Z

MOTION FOR THE AGENDA REGARDING THE "SCREENING OF AN ANTI-ISRAELI FILM.....," BUT MOST PAPERS TREAT THE EPISODE IN THEIR BACK PAGES.

8. THE GENERALLY CONSERVATIVE EDITORS OF YEDIOT, OVER PAO LUNCHEON, WONDERED AFTER SEEING PROGRAM, WHAT ALL THE FUSS WAS ABOUT. ONE IN PARTICULAR CONFESSED THAT HE FELL ASLEEP HALF WAY THROUGH. ALL AGREED THAT UPROAR OVER PROGRAM'S POSTPONEMENT MADE IT MORE UNLIKELY THAN BEFORE THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD INTERVENE IN THIS FASHION IN THE FUTURE.

9. GOVERNMENT CAN INTERFERE IN A DIFFERENT FASHION, THOUGH, WHEN IT SOON PICKS A NEW BROADCASTING BOARD TO REPLACE CURRENT, ALIGNMENT-PICKED MEMBERS. PRESS, HOWEVER, DOES NOT SEEM CONCERNED THAT NEW BOARD WOULD NECESSARILY BE MORE INTERVENTIONIST THAN ITS PREDECESSOR.

10. MAARIV REPORTS IT WAS TOLD BY TV MANAGERS THAT THE FILM "HIRBET HIZA" WONT BE PUT FOR SALE, EITHER IN ISRAEL OR ABROAD, (ALTHOUGH IT WAS SHOT IN COLOR PRECISELY FOR THAT PURPOSE), IN ORDER "TO PREVENT ITS USE FOR ANTI-ISRAELI PROPAGANDA." LEWIS

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FILMS, ARABS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, TELEVISION BROADCASTING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV02187
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780072-0906
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780250/aaaabqlm.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9dd1f2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEL AVIV 1837
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3582702
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REACTION TO CONTROVERSIAL TV FILM \"HIRBET HIZA\" FEB 15, 1978
TAGS: PINT, IS
To: STATE USIA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9dd1f2d8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014